DC
BAT MAN
ALL NEW! 60¢ U.K. 20p
MORE PAGES! NO. 343 JAN.
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
"A DAGGER SO DEADLY..."
INTRODUCING... A STARTLING NEW VILLAIN PRESENTED BY GERRY CONWAY, GENE COLAN & KLAUS JANSON!
MORE NEW PAGES FROM THE NEW DC
EXTRA! ROBIN THE TEEN WONDER IN "MADHOUSE"
GENE COLAN & DICK GIORDANO

TRUCKING ADVENTURE
WITH TYCO'S
US 1
ELECTRIC TRUCKING
WE JUST GOT A RUSH CALL FROM THE U.S.1 CONSTRUCTION SITE. THEY NEED OUR TRUCKS UP THERE -- AND QUICK!
LOAD UP THAT TRUCK WITH LOGS!
BACK UP! NOW LOAD THE GRAVEL
GRAVEL SUPPLY CO.
AND THEY NEED SOME PIPES TOO. HAUL 'EM UP AND MOVE OUT!
HEY! WATCH OUT FOR LOW FLYING AIRPLANES.
SLOW DOWN! DON'T PASS THE EXIT - WE'LL MISS OUR DELIVERY!
WOW! MADE IT JUST IN TIME.
NOW YOU CONTROL ALL THAT TRUCKING ACTION WITH TYCO'S...
US 1
ELECTRIC TRUCKING

ORPHANED AS A CHILD WHEN HIS PARENTS WERE MURDERED BEFORE HIS EYES, BRUCE WAYNE HAS TRAINED HIMSELF TO WAGE RELENTLESS WAR AGAINST CRIME AS THE DREAD AVENGER OF THE NIGHT...
BAT MAN
CREATED BY
"A DAGGER SO DEADLY..."
ON A CLIFFSIDE OUTSIDE GOTHAM CITY, IN THE PALE LIGHT OF A SETTING MOON... A WEEK-LONG SEARCH IS ABANDONED.
IT TWISTS HIS HEART TO ADMIT IT--
--BUT TONIGHT, THE BATMAN HAS FAILED.
GERRY CONWAY writer
GENE COLAN artist
KLAUS JANSON embellisher
JOHN COSTANZA letterer
ADRIENNE ROY colorist
DICK GIORDANO: editor

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I MUST HAVE EXPLORED EVERY LAST LITTLE CAVE IN THESE HILLS!
I FOUND NOTHING--NO SIGN THAT HE EVEN EXISTS, OR EVER EXISTED!
MAN-BAT HAS DISAPPEARED--AND SO HAS HIS TORMENTED ALTER-EGO, KIRK LANGSTROM!
I'M BEGINNING TO WONDER IF OUR BATTLE IN THE OLD BATCAVE BENEATH WAYNE MANOR EVER REALLY HAPPENED*...!
* AS TOLD LAST ISSUE.--DICK.
NO, IT HAPPENED, ALL RIGHT.
I'VE GOT THE BRUISES TO PROVE IT.
PERHAPS--IF I HADN'T GONE TO EGYPT *--
--IF I'D STARTED SEARCHING FOR MAN-BAT SOONER--INSTEAD OF LOSING THOSE FEW DAYS AFTER WE FOUGHT--!
PERHAPS--I COULD HAVE HELPED HIM--!
VRROOOHM
* DETECTIVE 508.--DICK.
AH WELL, THERE'S NOTHING TO BE GAINED BY PLAYING THE "MIGHT-HAVE-BEEN" GAME.
I'D BETTER CHECK IN WITH ALFRED--IT'S ALMOST DAWN--!
ACTIVATE SCRAMBLER-PHONE.
BATMAN TO BATCAVE. ALFRED, ARE YOU THERE?
2

I HAVE IT HERE.
YOU HAVE A 9:00 AM MEETING WITH THE WAYNE FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT THE GOTHAM NATIONAL BANK.
I'M AFRAID YOU WON'T GET MUCH SLEEP THIS MORNING, SIR.
AS ALWAYS, SIR.
I WOKE EARLY THIS MORNING, SIR-- COULDN'T SLEEP, SO I THOUGHT I'D DO SOME DUSTING.
AYNE FOUNDATION
WE REALLY SHOULD TAKE BETTER CARE OF THESE TROPHIES, SIR.
YOUR SCHEDULE, MASTER BRUCE?
THANKS, ALFRED. I WON'T EVEN TRY.
EXPECT ME IN HALF AN HOUR.
LATELY I'VE BEEN AVERAGING ONLY FOUR HOURS OF SLEEP A NIGHT.
IT'S NOT NEARLY ENOUGH.
:YAWN!:
TRYING TO LIVE TWO FULL LIVES-- AS BATMAN AND BRUCE WAYNE--IS SLOWLY DESTROYING ME!
SOMETHING'S GOT TO GIVE, AND I'M AFRAID IT'S-- EH?
WHAT ON EARTH?
SCRREEEEE
THAT CRAZY FOOL ON THE MOTORCYCLE-- ATTACKING A TRUCK-- WITH A KNIFE?
BROOHMM
3

MY GOD! THAT KNIFE--THROWN AT PRECISELY THE RIGHT ANGLE--
--PIERCED THE TRUCK'S HEAVY DUTY TIRE--
--THROWING THE WHOLE VEHICLE OUT OF CONTROL!
BLAM
SCREEEEEEE
CRASH
THAT'S A WARNING TO YOUR BOSS, TRUCKER-MAN!
NEXT TIME HE GETS A CALL FROM DAGGER, HE BETTER HAVE HIS PROTECTION MONEY ON HAND--
PUT
PUT
--OR BEFORE I'M THROUGH, HE WON'T HAVE ONE TRUCK LEFT!
THAT'S ALL I NEEDED TO HEAR.
THIS MAN JUST BOUGHT HIMSELF A TICKET TO JAIL!
WAIT--HE'S GLANCING BACK--PULLING ANOTHER KNIFE--?
WHAT--?
4

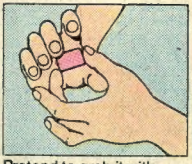
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

The magic in gum is Bubble Yum®

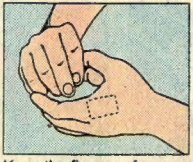
There's magic in Bubble Yum's number one taste. The fantastic flavor lasts a long long time with a smooth, soft chew. Get some and see how fast you can make it disappear.
Soft 'n Juicy
Bubble Yum
Regular Bubble Gum

Try this magic trick with your next piece.

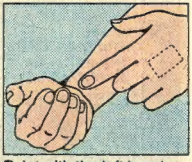
Hold the Bubble Yum between the thumb and middle finger of your left hand.



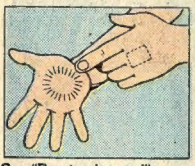
Pretend to grab it with your right hand while you really drop it into the palm of your left hand.



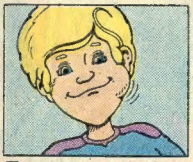
Keep the fingers of your right hand loose as if they had the gum.



Point with the left hand while you secretly hold the gum in your palm.



Say "Presto chango!" and open your right hand to show that the Bubble Yum has magically disappeared.



Then you can make the Bubble Yum disappear the easy way—and try the number one taste.

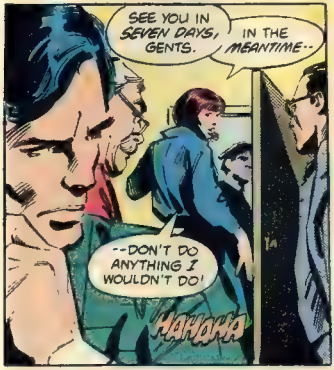
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
CHANNNG
FWOOOM
ZZZZZ
HE'S BLOWN THE BATMOBILE'S ENGINE!
STARTED AN OIL FIRE--!
SKREEEEEEE
IF IT SPREADS-- REACHES THE GAS TANK--
--THE ENTIRE CAR COULD EXPLODE!
CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN-- OTHER MOTORISTS MIGHT BE KILLED!
MANAGED TO REACH GOTHAM BRIDGE-- NEXT FEW SECONDS ARE CRITICAL!
THERE'S AN OPENING IN THE RAIL-- HAVE TO SLIP THROUGH--!
I DID IT!
NOW TO SAVE MY OWN NECK!
ONLY HAVE ONE SHOT--!
BUT THIS I CAN DO IN MY SLEEP!
KLANG
5

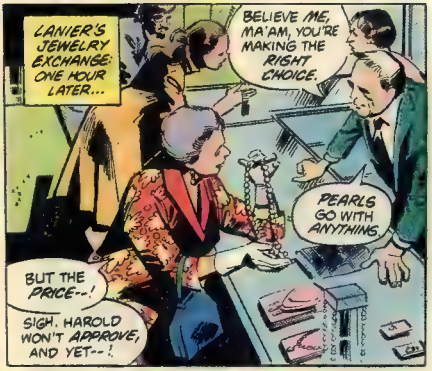
SCRATCH ONE BATMOBILE.
IT'S A GOOD THING BRUCE WAYNE IS A MILLION-AIRE.
NOT MUCH CHANCE OF CATCHING THAT KNIFE-THROWING GANGSTER NOW--
SPLASH
--BUT WE'LL MEET AGAIN.
GUARANTEED!
GOTHAM NATIONAL BAN
I'VE GOT A GOOD IDEA WHY GOTHAM NATIONAL'S PRESIDING OFFICER CALLED THIS MORNING'S MEETING.
THIS IS SOMETHING I'VE DREADED FOR WEEKS!
AH, HERE'S BRUCE. MAYBE NOW WE CAN BEGIN.
JANSEN, YOU CALLED THIS MEETING. WOULD YOU EXPLAIN WHY?
IF TODAY'S MEETING GOES AS I EXPECT IT WILL--
--THIS IS THE END OF THE WAYNE FOUNDATION, NOT TO MENTION THE WAYNE FAMILY FORTUNE!
BOARD ROOM
ACTUALLY, GENTLEMEN, I WORDED TO HAVE AN EXPLANATION FROM YOU.
THESE DOCUMENTS WERE DELIVERED TO MY OFFICE YESTERDAY.
THEY AUTHORIZE THE LIQUIDATION OF ALL WAYNE FOUNDATION ASSETS HELD IN TRUST BY GOTHAM NATIONAL BANK--
6

--SAID MONIES TO BE PAID TO SOMEONE NAMED MS. IVY!
GENTLEMEN, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT ASSETS IN EXCESS OF TEN MILLION DOLLARS!
IS THIS A HOAX?
I WISH IT WERE, JANSEN!
THOSE PAPERS CARRY OUR SIGNATURES--SIGNATURES GIVEN UNDER A HYPNOTIC SPELL!
THAT SAME SPELL PREVENTS US FROM DISOWNING THE DOCUMENTS...OR EVEN TELLING WHAT HAPPENED TO US THAT NIGHT WEEKS AGO--
"--WHEN POISON IVY FORCED THE ENTIRE WAYNE FOUNDATION BOARD TO DO HER WILL.*
"I'VE BEEN DREADING THIS MOMENT EVER SINCE."
*BATMAN #339.--DICK.
JANSEN, WE DID SIGN THOSE PAPERS, WE WON'T DENY IT.
BUT THERE'S MORE TO IT--THAT WOMAN--SHE--SHE--:AHHK!:
COLLINS CAN'T SAY A WORD IF HE TRIES, HE CHOKES.
IT'S THE SAME FOR EACH OF US!
IS THIS HOW IT ENDS?
MY, MY! AREN'T WE A SAD-LOOKING GROUP?
CHEER UP, BOYS. THE AGONY'S ALMOST OVER!

HELLO, IVY.
GLOATING ISN'T YOUR STYLE.
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK
MONEY IS MY STYLE, MR. WAYNE.
AND SPEAKING OF MONEY--

--WHEN DO I COLLECT?
AH... AHUM. IT'LL TAKE TIME TO ARRANGE SUCH A MASSIVE SELL-OFF, MS. IVY.
A WEEK?
NEXT MONDAY, THEN.


SEE YOU IN SEVEN DAYS, GENTS.
IN THE MEANTIME--
--DON'T DO ANYTHING I WOULDN'T DO!
HAHAHA


LANIER'S JEWELRY EXCHANGE: ONE HOUR LATER...
BELIEVE ME, MA'AM, YOU'RE MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE.
PEARLS GO WITH ANYTHING.
BUT THE PRICE--!
SIGH. HAROLD WON'T APPROVE, AND YET--!

TSK-TSK!
MUSTN'T DO ANYTHING TO UPSET HAROLD!
SWISH
EEEEK!
MAYBE YOU'D BETTER FORGET YOUR SHOPPING SPREE, LADY.

AS OF NOW--
--THIS DUMP IS CLOSED!
OH MY GOODNESS GRACIOUS!

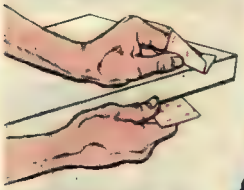
EH?
WHAT DO YOU KNOW, WE HAVE A HERO!
LUCKY FOR YOU I'M IN A GOOD MOOD, HERO.
SLAM
Y-YOU COULD'VE KILLED ME!
THAT'S THE IDEA.
NEXT TIME, I WILL. UNLESS YOU'VE GOT YOUR PROTECTION MONEY ON HAND.
MISTER, WE HAVE ALL THE PROTECTION WE NEED RIGHT HERE--
OH REALLY?
THUNG
GUESS AGAIN, JEWELER-MAN!
NOBODY CAN PROTECT YOU FROM DAGGER'S BLADE!
CRASH
IF YOU DON'T WANT SOME REAL TROUBLE--HAVE THAT MONEY READY TOMORROW!
WHOOSH
DAGGER DOESN'T WARN TWICE!
HEY! WHO'S THAT?
KID, WHOEVER IT IS--
--I'M GETTIN' OUT OF HIS WAY!
EEEOOEEE
POLICE! MUST'VE BEEN SUMMONED BY A SILENT ALARM!
9

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

America's favorite candy maker says:

"Amaze your friends with my Willy Wonka Magic Card Trick Kit!"

Make cards appear to pass back and forth through a table!



"Have your friends watch you put a 3 of clubs in an envelope and hold a 7 of diamonds under a table. The envelope, when opened, holds the 7 and you bring the 3 out from under the table. What a switch and *you* can do it!"

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Your Magic Card Trick Kit will also perform 3 other fantastic tricks. Now, here is how you can get the kit practically FREE!

Look for Willy Wonka Brands. Send just 35¢ for postage and handling plus two empty packages from any of my candies: Everlasting Gobstopper, Bottle Caps, Wacky Wafers, Tart N Tinys, Skrunch, Oompas, Dinasour Eggs, Daredevils, Volcano Rocks, Sneaks, Mix Ups and Just Juice. Soon, you'll be putting on your own magic show!

If coupon is missing, write your name and address plainly and send with 35¢ and two empty Willy Wonka packages to Willy Wonka Card Trick Offer, P.O. Box 123, Bethalto, IL 62010.

To receive Willy Wonka's Magic Card Trick Kit, send this coupon plus two empty packages from Willy Wonka candies and 35¢ to:

Willy Wonka Card Trick Offer, P.O. Box 123, Bethalto, IL 62010.

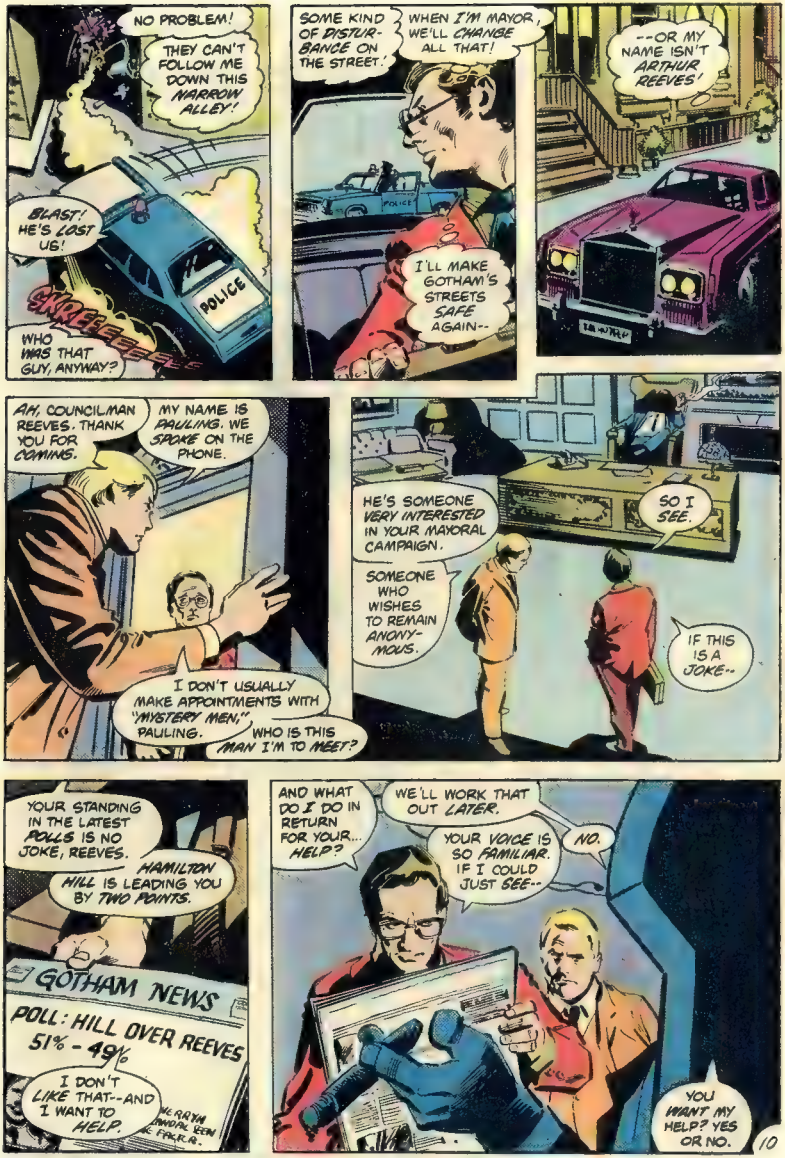
(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____


NO PROBLEM!
THEY CAN'T FOLLOW ME DOWN THIS NARROW ALLEY!
BLAST! HE'S LOST US!
SKREEEEEE
POLICE
WHO WAS THAT GUY, ANYWAY?
SOME KIND OF DISTURBANCE ON THE STREET.
WHEN I'M MAYOR, WE'LL CHANGE ALL THAT!
POLICE
I'LL MAKE GOTHAM'S STREETS SAFE AGAIN--
--OR MY NAME ISN'T ARTHUR REEVES!
AH, COUNCILMAN REEVES. THANK YOU FOR COMING.
MY NAME IS PAULING. WE SPOKE ON THE PHONE.
I DON'T USUALLY MAKE APPOINTMENTS WITH "MYSTERY MEN," PAULING.
WHO IS THIS MAN I'M TO MEET?
HE'S SOMEONE VERY INTERESTED IN YOUR MAYORAL CAMPAIGN.
SOMEONE WHO WISHES TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS.
SO I SEE.
IF THIS IS A JOKE--
YOUR STANDING IN THE LATEST POLLS IS NO JOKE, REEVES.
HAMILTON HILL IS LEADING YOU BY TWO POINTS.
GOTHAM NEWS
POLL: HILL OVER REEVES 51% - 49%
I DON'T LIKE THAT--AND I WANT TO HELP.
AND WHAT DO I DO IN RETURN FOR YOUR... HELP?
WE'LL WORK THAT OUT LATER.
NO.
YOUR VOICE IS SO FAMILIAR. IF I COULD JUST SEE--
YOU WANT MY HELP? YES OR NO.

WHAT COULD ANY POLITICIAN SAY BUT-- YES!
GOOD MAN.
THIS SHOULD CLINCH YOUR ANTI-BATMAN CAMPAIGN!
IT'S PHOTO-GRAPHIC PROOF OF BATMAN'S SECRET IDENTITY!
GOTHAM RIVER!
NIGHT IS BUT RECENTLY COME TO THE CITY, AND THE SHADOWS ARE NOT YET AT THEIR THICKEST HERE AT THE BASE OF THE GOTHAM BRIDGE...
IN THE TWILIGHT, A SLEEK BLACK SHAPE CAN BE OBSERVED MOORED TO THE CREAKING PILINGS, WERE ANYONE HERE TO OBSERVE..
...AND IF THAT SAME PHANTOM OBSERVER WERE TO TURN HIS GAZE DOWNWARD TO THE RIVER'S MURKY DEPTHS, HE MIGHT ESPY ANOTHER SHADOW THERE.
THIS SECOND SHADOW IS A MAN--
--SEARCHING FOR CLUES--
--TO SOLVE A MYSTERY.
--DAGGER'S BLADE, ALFRED!
THE WAY IT HIT THE BATMOBILE THIS MORNING, I KNEW IT MUST STILL HAVE BEEN EMBEDDED IN THE ENGINE!
SO YOU DOVE TO RETRIEVE IT.
MAY I ASK WHY, SIR?

YOU DON'T BUY THIS KIND OF STEEL IN A SPORTING GOODS STORE.
SOMEONE FORGED IT TO SPECIAL ORDER.
Rennington Steel
AND THAT SOMEONE SIGNED THEIR NAME!
DAGGER HAS STRUCK HALF A DOZEN TIMES TODAY--TERRORIZING MERCHANTS AROUND THE CITY!
HE'S LEFT NO CLUES FOR THE POLICE--OR ME--UNTIL NOW.
SHALL I HOLD DINNER FOR YOU, SIR?
DON'T BOTHER, ALFRED.
THIS COULD BE A LONG NIGHT.
KROOM
RENNINGTON STEEL, ONE OF THE NORTHEAST'S MOST RESPECTED CONSUMER BLADE MANUFACTURERS, OCCUPIES A SPRAWLING FIFTEEN ACRES IN THE RURAL FARM COUNTRY TWENTY MILES NORTH OF GOTHAM CITY..
SORRY TO GET YOU OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT..
...BUT MY MISSION IS URGENT.
SO YOU SAID ON THE PHONE.
WE'VE SHUT DOWN FOR THE DAY--
--AND SINCE WE DON'T RUN A NIGHT SHIFT ANYMORE, THINGS ARE PRETTY QUIET.
TELL YOU WHAT. BEFORE WE LOOK AT OUR SALES RECORDS--
--I'LL GIVE YOU THE PENNY TOUR.
I REALLY DON'T HAVE TIME TO...

PLEASE, BATMAN, THIS IS IMPORTANT TO ME.
--CARRYING ON A TRADITION THAT EXTENDS BACK SIX HUNDRED YEARS.
MY FAMILY CREATED THE MARKET FOR CRAFTMANSHIP QUALITY BLADES HERE IN AMERICA--
IMPRESSIVE.
BUT, MR. RENNINGTON..
I KNOW, I KNOW-- WHO CARES?

NOBODY CARES ABOUT QUALITY ANYMORE.
"TOO EXPENSIVE," THEY SAY. "NOT ENOUGH DEMAND."
I'M GLAD MY FATHER ISN'T ALIVE TO SEE--
NEVER MIND.

YOU WANTED TO SEE OUR RECORDS FOR PRIVATE SALES IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS.
STAY HERE. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.

RENNINGTON'S A BITTER MAN.
APPARENTLY THINGS HAVEN'T GONE WELL FOR THE FAMILY FIRM SINCE HE TOOK OVER.
NO NIGHT SHIFT... WORN CARPET...

...DECAYING FURNITURE... A PALL OF DUST OVER EVERYTHING.

I UNDERSTAND, NOW. I CAME HERE HOPING FOR A LEAD TO DAGGER...

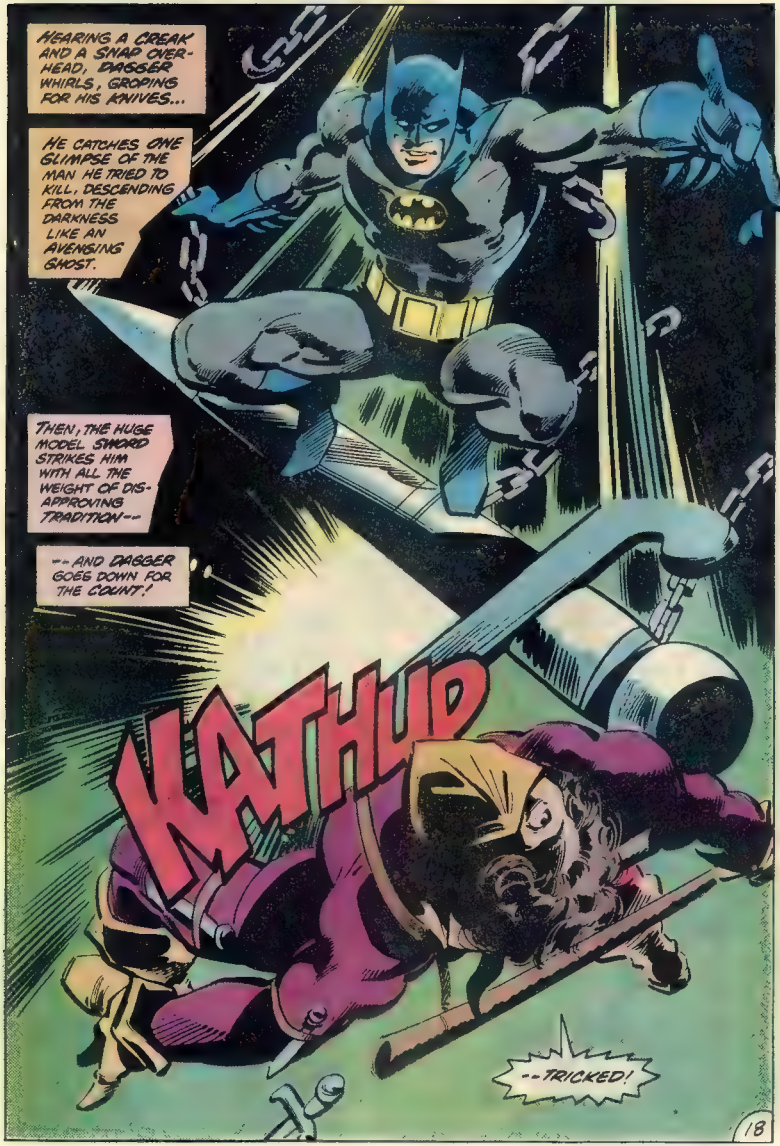
...AND INSTEAD--

--I'VE FOUND HIM!
BLADES ARE MY LIFE, BATMAN.
BUT THEY'LL BE YOUR DEATH!
HE DODGES INSTINCTIVELY, FEELING A DEADLY BREEZE INCHES FROM HIS FACE--
SWACK
FOR A MOMENT, HE STRUGGLES AGAINST THE BLADE PINNING HIS CAPE, AS DAGGER ADVANCES; SWORD SWINGING...
THEN, CLOTH TEARS, AND HE SPRINGS, AGAIN FEELING THAT DEADLY BREEZE--
SMASH
SWISH
--THIS TIME FAR TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO RUN, BATMAN?
THIS PLANT IS MY HOME.
I PLAYED HERE AS A BOY...
14

...AND I KNOW ITS EVERY NOOK AND HIDING PLACE AS WELL AS I KNOW MY OWN HAND!
YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM ME, BATMAN!
I DON'T INTEND TO!
BAD MOVE, BATMAN!
I SAW YOU COMING-- HAD A CHANCE TO DUCK!
NOW LET'S COMPLETE OUR TOUR!
WHUMP
THIS IS WHERE WE TRIM OUR BLADES!
AND TO GET JUST THE RIGHT EDGE--
--WE USE A STAINLESS STEEL DRESS!
HACK
HACK
HACK

GOOD LORD!
KACHAK!
CAN'T RELAX FOR A SECOND!
DAGGER HAS THE ADVANTAGE--THIS IS HIS HOME GROUND!
HE KNOWS THE DANGERS HERE, AND I DON'T!
WHIT
SOMEHOW, I HAVE TO TURN THAT STRENGTH--
--INTO A WEAKNESS!
MISSED HIM!
HE'S SLIPPED OFF SOMEWHERE INTO THE SHADOWS!
DOESN'T MATTER.
SOONER OR LATER, I'LL FIND HIM, AND THEN--!
TINKLE
DISPLAY ROOM
MAKE THAT "SOONER."
DISPLA
ROO
SOUNDED LIKE BREAKING GLASS IN THE DISPLAY ROOM.
I REALLY DON'T WANT TO KILL HIM...
...BUT HE'S LEFT ME NO OTHER CHOICE.
16

I CAN'T LET HIM REVEAL THAT DAVID RENNINGTON IS ALSO DAGGER!
IT WOULD RUIN THE FAMILY NAME-- DESTROY OUR REPUTATION!
THAT'S ALL THAT COUNTS: THE FAMI--
--LY?
BATMAN!
DIE!
THUNK
WHAT?
ONE OF THE DISPLAY DUMMIES?
BUT THAT MEANS I'VE BEEN--


HEARING A CREAK AND A SNAP OVERHEAD, DAGGER WHIRLS, GROPING FOR HIS KNIVES...
HE CATCHES ONE GLIMPSE OF THE MAN HE TRIED TO KILL, DESCENDING FROM THE DARKNESS LIKE AN AVENGING GHOST.
THEN, THE HUGE MODEL SWORD STRIKES HIM WITH ALL THE WEIGHT OF DISAPPROVING TRADITION--
--AND DAGGER GOES DOWN FOR THE COUNT!
KATHUD
--TRICKED!

CONCLUDED ON 22nd PAGE FOLLOWING

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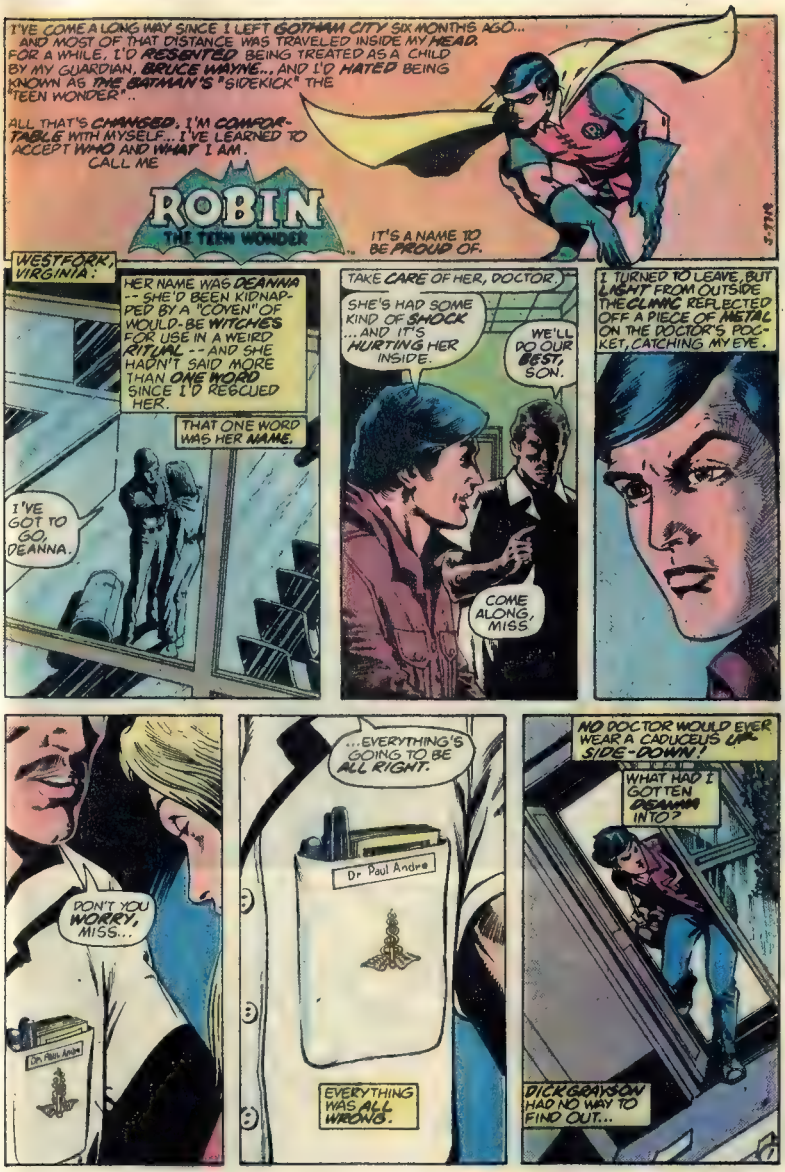
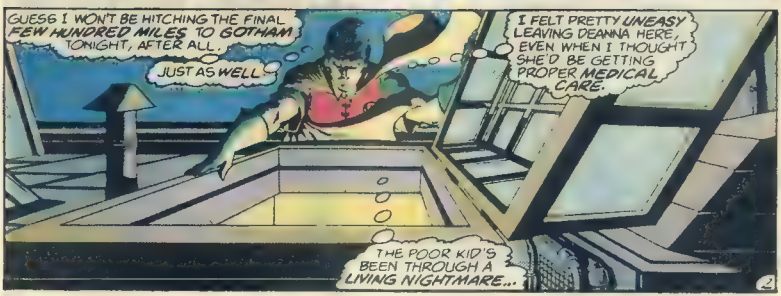
Right Down to the last detail

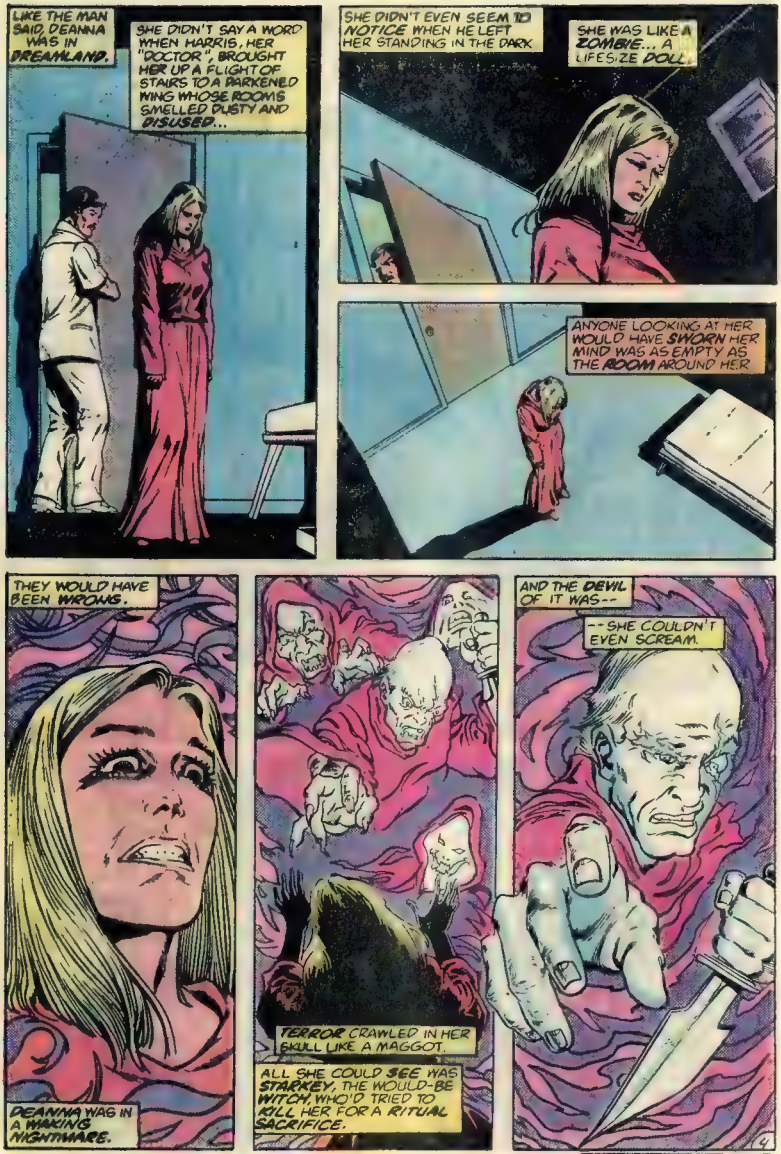
EPILOGUE:
LOOKS QUIET FROM OUT HERE, SARGE!
JUST KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN, ROOKIE!
REMEMBER, THAT ANONYMOUS PHONE CALL TIPPED US WE'D FIND A DANGEROUS CRIMINAL HERE AT THIS PLANT!
A DANGEROUS CRIMINAL--IN STOKELY, NEW YORK?
DON'T RUN OUR TOWN DOWN, SON!
WE MAY NOT BE GOTHAM CITY, BUT WE'VE GOT OUR SHARE OF--
SOMETHING MOVED IN THAT ROOM UP AHEAD!
WHOA.
I SEE IT, SARGE!
SHOULD I--
YOU DON'T DO A THING, SON!
KEEP BACK A STEP WHILE I SLIP IN AND SEE WHAT--
--THE HEY?
IS THAT THE "DANGEROUS CRIMINAL," SARGE?
SON, HE MAY NOT LOOK LIKE MUCH--
BUT HE'S ALL WE'VE GOT!
STOKELY P.D
...BY NOW, THE LOCAL POLICE HAVE RENNINGTON IN CUSTODY.
HE TRIED TO FINANCE A FAILING FAMILY BUSINESS BY STARTING A PROTECTION RACKET...
...AND IT MIGHT HAVE WORKED, FOR A WHILE...
...BUT DASSER JUST COULDN'T--CUT IT!
AND IN SPITE OF THE HOUR, AND HIS BONE-ACHING WEARINESS, OR PERHAPS BECAUSE OF THEM... THE BATMAN SMILES!
POISON IVY!


I'VE COME A LONG WAY SINCE I LEFT GOTHAM CITY SIX MONTHS AGO... AND MOST OF THAT DISTANCE WAS TRAVELED INSIDE MY HEAD. FOR A WHILE, I'D RESENTED BEING TREATED AS A CHILD BY MY GUARDIAN, BRUCE WAYNE... AND I'D HATED BEING KNOWN AS THE BATMAN'S "SIDEKICK" THE "TEEN WONDER"...
ALL THAT'S CHANGED. I'M COMFORTABLE WITH MYSELF... I'VE LEARNED TO ACCEPT WHO AND WHAT I AM.
CALL ME
ROBIN
THE TEEN WONDER
IT'S A NAME TO BE PROUD OF.
WESTFORK, VIRGINIA:
HER NAME WAS DEANNA -- SHE'D BEEN KIDNAPPED BY A "COVEN" OF WOULD-BE WITCHES FOR USE IN A WEIRD RITUAL -- AND SHE HADN'T SAID MORE THAN ONE WORD SINCE I'D RESCUED HER.
THAT ONE WORD WAS HER NAME.
I'VE GOT TO GO, DEANNA.
TAKE CARE OF HER, DOCTOR.
SHE'S HAD SOME KIND OF SHOCK ... AND IT'S HURTING HER INSIDE.
WE'LL DO OUR BEST, SON.
COME ALONG, MISS.
I TURNED TO LEAVE, BUT LIGHT FROM OUTSIDE THE CLINIC REFLECTED OFF A PIECE OF METAL ON THE DOCTOR'S POCKET, CATCHING MY EYE.
DON'T YOU WORRY, MISS...
Dr. Paul Andre
...EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT.
Dr Paul Andre
EVERYTHING WAS ALL WRONG.
NO DOCTOR WOULD EVER WEAR A CADUCEUS UPSIDE-DOWN!
WHAT HAD I GOTTEN DEANNA INTO?
DICK GRAYSON HAD NO WAY TO FIND OUT...

...BUT ROBIN WOULD HAVE ONE MORE MYSTERY TO SOLVE BEFORE HE REACHED..
ODYSSEY'S END
GERRY CONWAY Writer
TREVOR VON EEDEN Penciller
RODIN RODRIGUEZ Inker
P. BERNARD R. Letterer
CARL GAFFORD Colorist
DICK GIORDANO Editor


GUESS I WON'T BE HITCHING THE FINAL FEW HUNDRED MILES TO GOTHAM TONIGHT, AFTER ALL.
JUST AS WELL
I FELT PRETTY UNEASY LEAVING DEANNA HERE, EVEN WHEN I THOUGHT SHE'D BE GETTING PROPER MEDICAL CARE.
THE POOR KID'S BEEN THROUGH A LIVING NIGHTMARE...
2

..AND I HAVE A SICK FEELING I MAY HAVE LET HER IN FOR SOMETHING JUST AS BAD, IF NOT WORSE!
I PICKED THIS CLINIC BECAUSE IT WAS ON THE MAIN HIGHWAY.
I THOUGHT DEANNA NEEDED HELP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
COULD BE I CHOSE WRONG.
IF THAT DOCTOR IS A PHONEY, WHAT IS HE DOING HERE?
AND WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF THE CLINIC'S STAFF?
VOICES FROM THAT FLOOR VENT...
...AND I CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT THEY'RE SAYING!
I TOLD HARRIS TO STASH THE GIRL IN ONE OF THE ROOMS ON THE THIRD FLOOR.
WE DON'T WANT ANY COMPLICATIONS WHEN THAT DRUG SHIPMENT ARRIVES.
I SAY WE SHOULD HAVE WASTED HER.
SHE'S SEEN OUR FACES-- HER AND THAT KID.
SHE'S IN DREAMLAND.
ONCE WE PICK UP THE DRUGS, WE'LL BE OUTTA HERE--
--AND BY THE TIME THE CLINIC STAFF MANAGE TO FREE THEMSELVES, WE'LL BE HALFWAY TO HAWAII!
THAT EXPLAINS THAT.
THOSE PHONEY "DOCTORS" ARE OBVIOUSLY PLANNING TO HIJACK THIS CLINIC'S DRUG SHIPMENT.
BETTER FIND DEANNA--
--GET HER AWAY BEFORE TROUBLE STARTS!
3


LIKE THE MAN SAID, DEANNA WAS IN DREAMLAND.
SHE DIDN'T SAY A WORD WHEN HARRIS, HER "DOCTOR", BROUGHT HER UP A FLIGHT OF STAIRS TO A DARKENED WING WHOSE ROOMS SMELLED DUSTY AND DISUSED...
SHE DIDN'T EVEN SEEM TO NOTICE WHEN HE LEFT HER STANDING IN THE DARK
SHE WAS LIKE A ZOMBIE... A LIFE-SIZE DOLL.
ANYONE LOOKING AT HER WOULD HAVE SWORN HER MIND WAS AS EMPTY AS THE ROOM AROUND HER
THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN WRONG.
DEANNA WAS IN A MAKING NIGHTMARE.
TERROR CRAWLED IN HER SKULL LIKE A MAGGOT.
ALL SHE COULD SEE WAS STARKEY, THE WOULD-BE WITCH, WHO'D TRIED TO KILL HER FOR A RITUAL SACRIFICE.
AND THE DEVIL OF IT WAS--
--SHE COULDN'T EVEN SCREAM.
CONTINUED ON 2ND

WHAT HAS SMURFS & SPACE STARS & SPIDER-MAN & A SUPER POWER HOUR?
NBC SUPER STAR SATURDAY
POW!
THERE'S EXCITING NEW FUN IN THE!
New!
SMURFS
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Who are the "biggest" TV? The Smurfs! Those famous, fun-loving adventurers, little creatures striving to uphold their "true-blue" spirit of love & happiness! Will Papa Smurf & the gang outsmart the evil wizard Gargamel? Smurf-tainly!!
THE FLINTSTONE COMEDY SHOW
Stone-age shenanigans with those Bedrock buddies, Fred & Barney, and all their pals!
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Where can teenagers fly? At Hero High! They're "super-heroes in training" facing missions impossible on— and off— campus! And who's the mightiest mortal? Captain Marvel!
New!
THE KID SUPER POWER HOUR WITH SHAZAM
© FILMATION ASSOCIATES, 1981 © D C COMICS FILMATION, 1981
New!
SPIDER-MAN AND HIS AMAZING FRIENDS
© MARVEL COMICS GROUP, A DIVISION OF CADENCE INDUSTRIES CORP. 1981.
Villains beware... Spider-Man is here! The world's most popular hero spins a web of excitement with brave Iceman, beautiful Firestar and more!
New!
SPACE STARS
© HANNA-BARBERA PRODUCTIONS, INC., 1981.
Crazy cosmic travelers zoom into far-out action! Space Ghost! The Herculoids! Teen Force! Astro and the Space Mutts.
THE DAFFY/ SPEEDY SHOW
Thrills are quacky & wacky with Daffy, Speedy and their friends!
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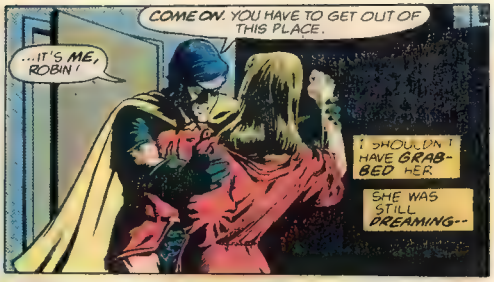
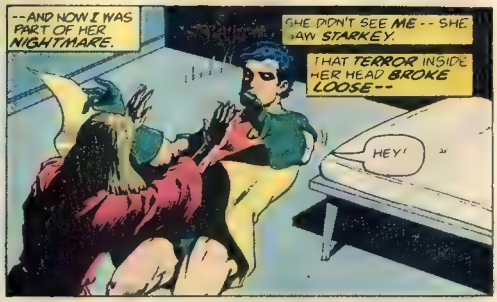
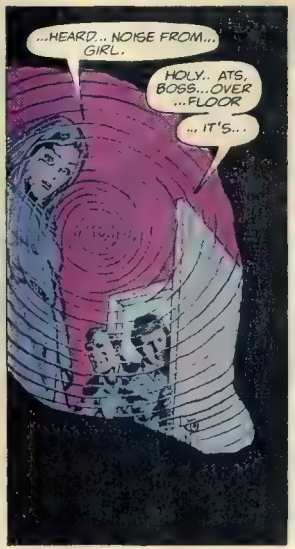
BULLWINKLE
The moose is loose! Hilarious escapades with Rocky and the whole comical crew!
© P.A.T./JAMBO, 1981.
Consult local listings.
STARTING SEPTEMBER 12!!

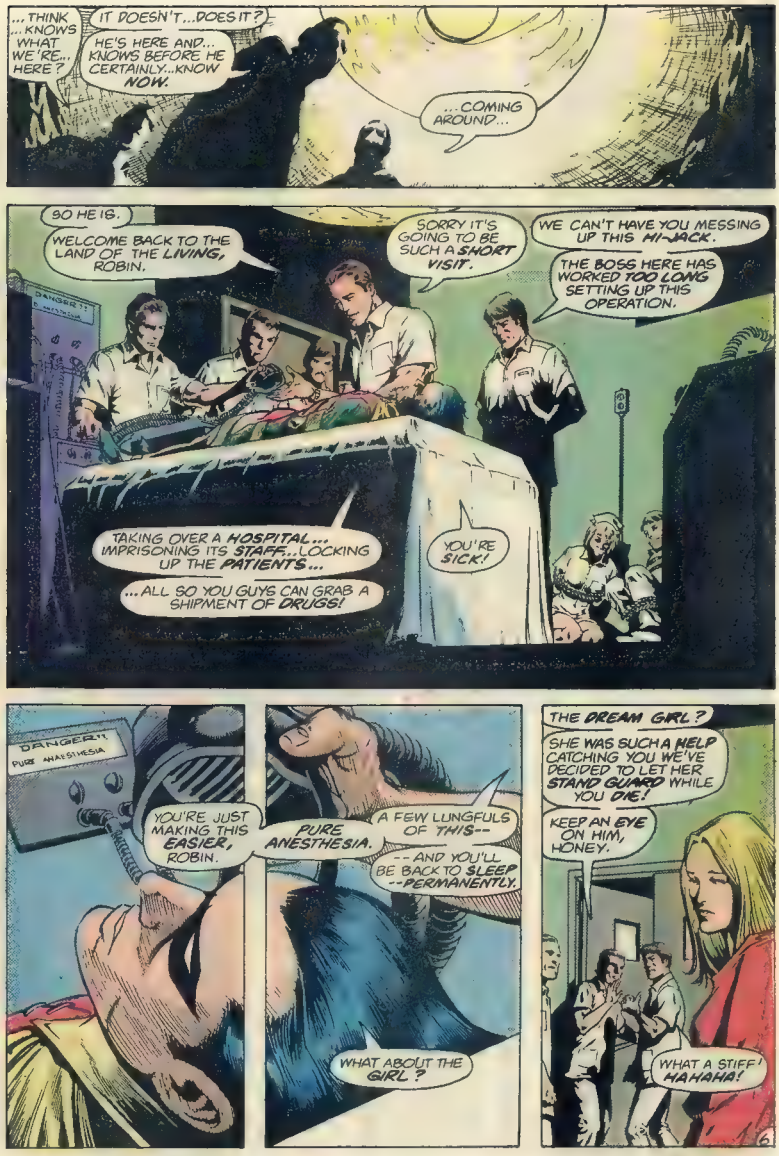
DEANNA..

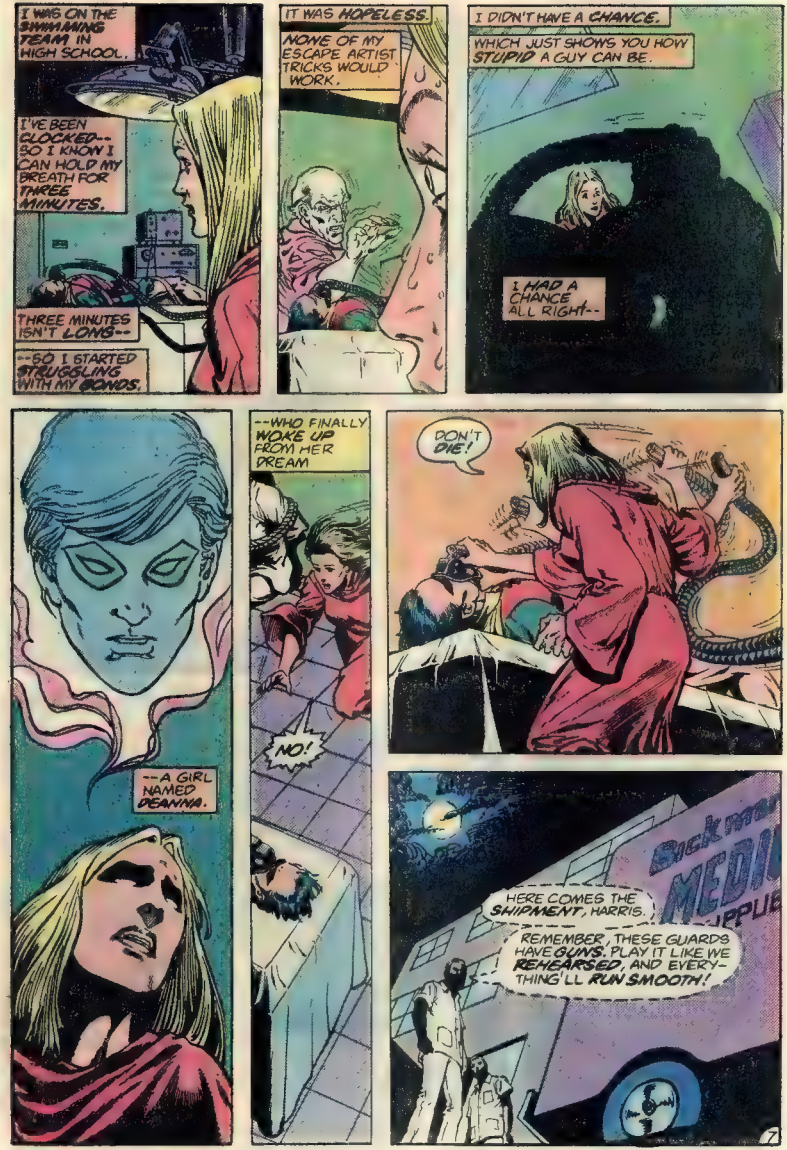

COME ON. YOU HAVE TO GET OUT OF THIS PLACE.
...IT'S ME, ROBIN!
I SHOULDN'T HAVE GRABBED HER.
SHE WAS STILL DREAMING--


--AND NOW I WAS PART OF HER NIGHTMARE.
SHE DIDN'T SEE ME -- SHE SAW STARKEY.
THAT TERROR INSIDE HER HEAD BROKE LOOSE--
HEY!

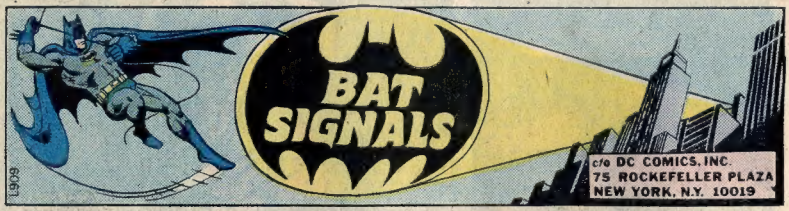
KLUNK


...HEARD.. NOISE FROM... GIRL.
HOLY.. ATS, BOSS...OVER ...FLOOR
... IT'S...


...THINK ...KNOWS WHAT WE'RE... HERE?
IT DOESN'T...DOES IT?
HE'S HERE AND... KNOWS BEFORE HE CERTAINLY...KNOW NOW.
...COMING AROUND...
SO HE IS.
WELCOME BACK TO THE LAND OF THE LIVING, ROBIN.
SORRY IT'S GOING TO BE SUCH A SHORT VISIT.
WE CAN'T HAVE YOU MESSING UP THIS HI-JACK.
THE BOSS HERE HAS WORKED TOO LONG SETTING UP THIS OPERATION.
TAKING OVER A HOSPITAL... IMPRISONING ITS STAFF...LOCKING UP THE PATIENTS...
...ALL SO YOU GUYS CAN GRAB A SHIPMENT OF DRUGS!
YOU'RE SICK!
DANGER!! PURE ANAESTHESIA
YOU'RE JUST MAKING THIS EASIER, ROBIN.
PURE ANESTHESIA.
A FEW LUNGFULS OF THIS--
--AND YOU'LL BE BACK TO SLEEP --PERMANENTLY.
WHAT ABOUT THE GIRL?
THE DREAM GIRL?
SHE WAS SUCH A HELP CATCHING YOU WE'VE DECIDED TO LET HER STAND GUARD WHILE YOU DIE!
KEEP AN EYE ON HIM, HONEY.
WHAT A STIFF! HAHAHA!


I WAS ON THE SWIMMING TEAM IN HIGH SCHOOL.
I'VE BEEN CLOCKED-- SO I KNOW I CAN HOLD MY BREATH FOR THREE MINUTES.
THREE MINUTES ISN'T LONG--
--SO I STARTED STRUGGLING WITH MY BONDS.
IT WAS HOPELESS.
NONE OF MY ESCAPE ARTIST TRICKS WOULD WORK.
I DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE.
WHICH JUST SHOWS YOU HOW STUPID A GUY CAN BE.
I HAD A CHANCE ALL RIGHT--
--A GIRL NAMED DEANNA.
--WHO FINALLY WOKE UP FROM HER DREAM
NO!
DON'T DIE!
HERE COMES THE SHIPMENT, HARRIS.
REMEMBER, THESE GUARDS HAVE GUNS. PLAY IT LIKE WE REHEARSED, AND EVERYTHING'LL RUN SMOOTH!
7

DREAM ON, CHUMPS
YOU'RE IN FOR A RUDE, CRUDE AWAKENING!
WHY DWELL ON WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?
BETWEEN ME AND THE DRUG SHIPMENT GUARDS, THOSE WOULD-BE HI-JACKERS DIDN'T STAND A CHANCE... AND I'M A GUY WHO KNOWS ABOUT CHANCES!
AFTERWARD DEANNA AND I SAID GOOD-BYE, AND THIS TIME I WAS SURE SHE'D BE ALL RIGHT.
SPEAKING FOR MYSELF, I WASN'T SO SURE...
THANKS FOR THE HELP, YOUNGSTER.
I KNOW YOU AND THAT BATMAN FELLA DON'T ACCEPT REWARDS, BUT--
ACTUALLY, OFFICER, I WOULD LIKE A REWARD.
I'M GETTING TIRED OF RIDING MY THUMB.
THE PEOPLE YOU MEET ARE WEIRD.
IF IT WOULDN'T BE ASKING TOO MUCH--
--HOW 'BOUT A BUS TICKET FROM HERE TO GOTHAM CITY?
I FEEL LIKE GOING HOME IN STYLE!
NEXT: A FULL-LENGTH EPIC -- AS ROBIN RETURNS TO GOTHAM FOR--
DYNAMIC DUO REDUX!
DON'T MISS IT!



Dear Dick,

First of all, I want to wish you good luck with your editing chores in BATMAN, BRAVE & BOLD, and DETECTIVE!

Now, in regard to Batman #338—SUPERB!!!!!!!!!!!!! This issue was excellent in my opinion! The cover was extraordinary, as Aparo's usually are, but this one was unique! I especially liked the bright coloring on it! The story art was also quite good! The expression on Pierre Foote's face (page 6, panel 6) and the actual appearance of Batman's latest foe, the Sportsman, stand out in my mind! I hope we'll be seeing more of this new villain in future Bat family magazines!

Gerry Conway should be heartily congratulated on this story! "This Sporting Death" will always be one of my favorite Batman stories. In my opinion, it should be one of the year's Top 10! The expectations of Mantle's father and his disappointment at his son's lack of athletic ability are quite common in the U.S. and you've explored one of the most terrible (although improbable) results of his emotions!

The Robin "bonus extra" was also quite good! He really is living up to his full potential as ward of the World's Greatest Detective! By the way, I thought Robin was to be a regular back-up in BATMAN like Firestorm is in *THE FLASH*! Although I would much prefer 25-page Batman tales, I enjoy Robin's solo stories. Taking this into account as well as the fact that Man-Bat has no home now, I vote for a special Batman Family Dollar Comic to be given a trial run of five issues by next summer! I miss the Robin/Batgirl team-ups, which could once again be featured in a revived Batman Family as well as monthly Robin solos, Man-Bat, and Batgirl could move over from *DETECTIVE*, leaving room for an Elongated Man series. Batman Family could also feature a series which used to appear in Batman called "Unsolved Cases of The Batman," and I'm still hoping Selina Kyle will someday turn up as the New Batwoman! How 'bout it Bat-fans!? Let Dick know how you feel about my suggestions!!!

Devon James
Rt. 2, Box 3-A
Wallingford, KY 41093

Thank you for your well wishes and for your abundant praise.

We expect to do a number of full-length Batman stories as well as some shorter stories with Robin back-up features. Starting with BATMAN 346 or 347 (we have yet to decide) we'll be featuring a shorter Batman story (17 to 19 pages) and a back-up (probably Robin) in almost every issue.

I like the Batman Family concept but the title was discontinued before I arrived here. That indicates that not enough of you readers liked the BATMAN FAMILY dollar comic well enough to support it. I'm not aware of any new information that would influence our publisher to try again. Of course, if we were deluged with letters . . .

* * *

Editor,

I would like to ask you one question. In BATMAN 338, page 10, panel 7, where does Batman keep his costume?

Michael Marsee
Box 22
Little Terry, NJ 07643

Under his street clothes. If we had colored the panel you mentioned in full color, you would undoubtedly have seen that his suit jacket and his shirt is just coming off his left arm.

* * *

Dear Dick:

BATMAN #338 was a terrible disappointment to me. The idea of the Sportsman sounded good (as the Earth-One counterpart of the Sportsmaster), but alas, he fell short, oh so short of my expectations.

Somehow, a villain motivated by bitterness isn't very believable when he goes after people he doesn't even know. It's not their fault he's dying, so why didn't Mantle go after the real culprit—his father? And didn't Mantle Senior realize what could happen if his Memory RNA contained dangerous side effects? Why didn't he try it on a test animal first instead of putting his own son at risk?

Ah, well, there were some good points, like the return of Irv and Frank. And Jim's cover was a beauty as always.

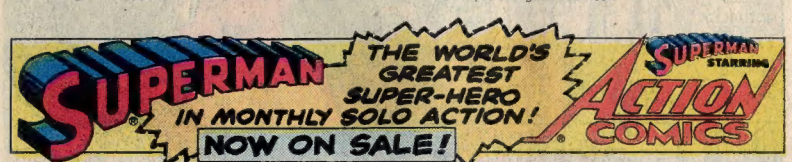
Alicia Wu
Cupertino, CA

The Sportsman WAS conceived as the Earth-One counterpart of the Sportsmaster. As a matter of fact, the first half of the original script referred to him as Sportsmaster. We changed the name as work was in progress because we didn't want to confuse some of our older readers with a new Sportsmaster.

I'm not trying to convince you to like "This Sporting Death" but please consider the following: 1. MOST villains go after people they DON'T know. Particularly DERANGED villains! Could you call the Sportsman anything else? 2. People (villains) OFTEN vent their anger, frustrations, etc. on those who are NOT responsible for providing the reasons for their anger. 3. Mantle, Sr. was ALSO obviously deranged. But we've all heard of supposedly normal individuals or organizations experimenting with humans before potential side-effects could be analyzed.

I hope we'll do better by you next time, Alicia.

Thank you and good afternoon.



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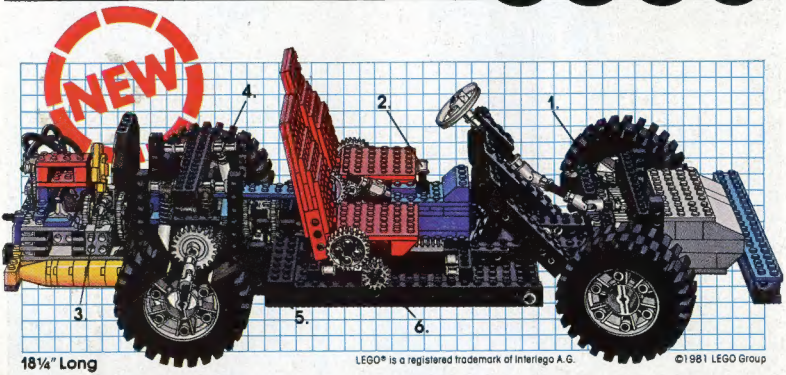

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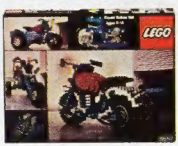
DEFINITELY NOT KID'S STUFF.



FLATTERMANN